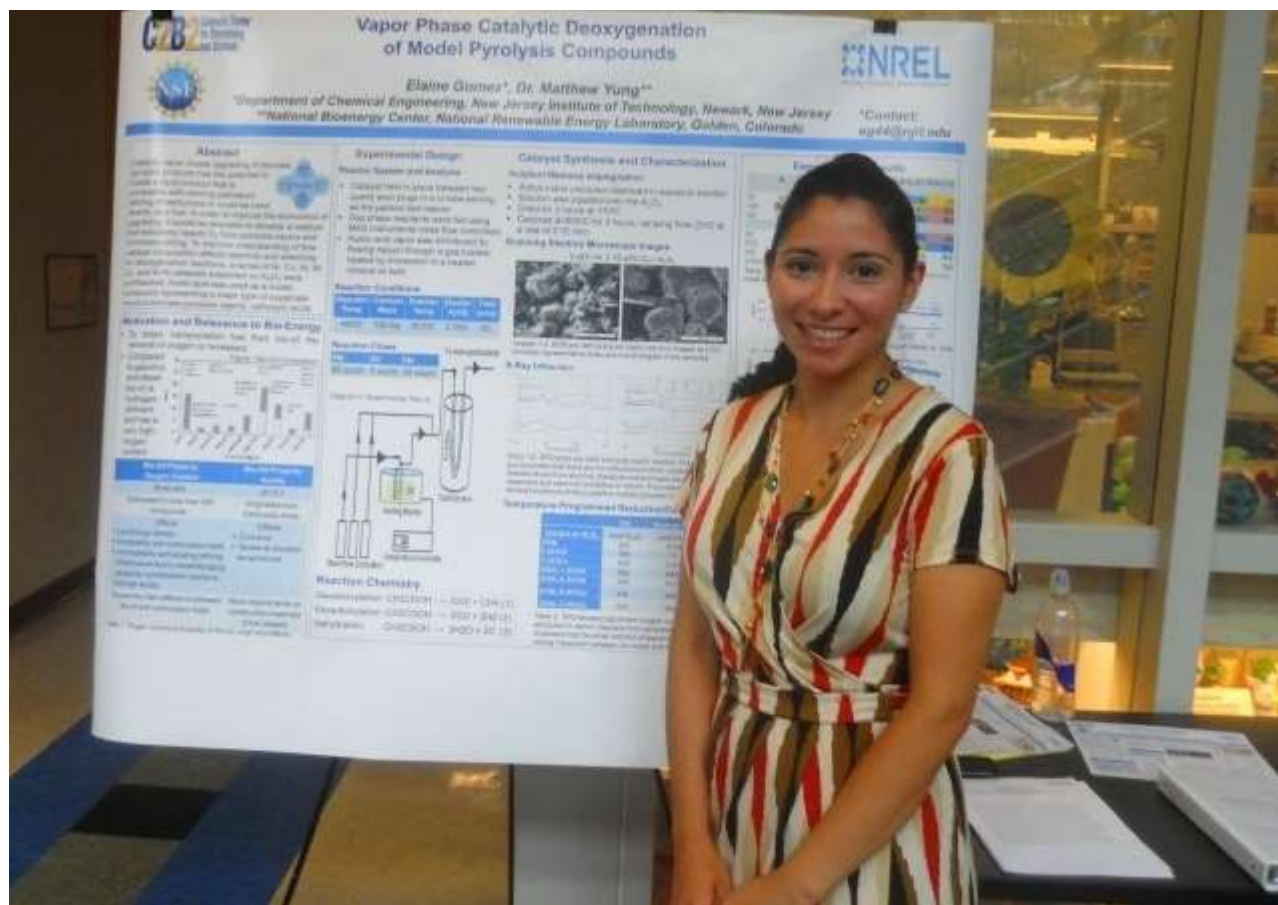


# Latinos make their way into science

Offer financial aid for Hispanics to get more involved



Elaine Gomez also integrates the program.

By: *Carmen Cusido / Special ED, EL DIARIO*, POSTED: SEP 15, 2014 12:01 AM EST

Union City, NJ - One of the reasons that led the teenager Justin Perez want to be a biomedical engineer is having a sister with physical and cognitive disabilities.

The Cuban-American second generation participates in a unique summer program at Rutgers University, where he works on a prototype to help people with certain disabilities to eat independently.

"Much of the project is abstract at this time. Thing modeled on the computer and printed a version in a 3D printer," Perez (17) said. "It was gratifying to see him go from an idea to a model and see the potential to help people."

Pérez is part of the small but growing number of Latino students in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, or STEM (its acronym in English).

The program participates Perez receives between 300 and 400 nominations from secondary schools, which can nominate one of every 325 students. A maximum of 100 are selected annually, said Jean

Patrick Antoine, assistant director for the *New Jersey Governor's School of Engineering & Technology* . This summer, 88 students were enrolled.

Other high schools and colleges in New Jersey offer opportunities for students interested in STEM careers.

In *Union City High School* , for five years the *Academy for Enrichment and Advancement* prepares an average of 160 students each year, said Nadia Makar, the supervisor for secondary science and academia.

"Since we started the program, we try to encourage Hispanic students to enter STEM STEM careers is vital to keep the United States as a world leader -. 's Where the jobs are," Makar said.

Among students Makar is influenced by Elaine Gomez, who studied chemical engineering in spite of their parents, a mechanic and a housewife, were not able to pay for their college education.

"Many students feel trapped because their parents can not afford, but scholarships are available," Gomez (22), whose grants covered their tuition payments undergraduate said.

Recently, the young Mexican ancestry Argentina and graduated from Union City *New Jersey Institute of Technology* , and autumn begins a doctoral program at *Columbia University*.

The goal is to have your own Gómez research laboratory. "I'm persevering character and so I propose," he said.